

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Disposition of the Claims

The present response is intended to be a full and complete response to the Advisory Action mailed April 29, 2010. Claims 7 to 20 are pending in the present application.

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 7 has been amended to indicate the placement of the entry device with regard to the chamber. Claim 8 has been amended to indicate the placement of the exit device with regard to the chamber and the flow of the running product through this particular embodiment of the exit device. Claim 9 has been amended to indicate the placement of the exit device with regard to the chamber and the flow of the running product through this particular embodiment of the exit device. Claim 10 has been amended to indicate the placement of the entry device with regard to the chamber and the flow of the running product through this specific embodiment. Claim 19 has been amended to indicate the placement of the entry device and the exit device with regard to the chamber and the flow of the running product through these particular devices.

Objections to the Claims

The Examiner appears to maintain the objection to claims 10 and 15 to 18. As noted in the previous response, claim 10 has been rewritten in independent form. In the present response, claim 10 has been further amended to indicate the placement of the entry device with regard to the chamber and the flow of the running product. Accordingly, in view of this amendment, Applicants maintain that claim 10 is now in a condition for allowance. Claims 15 to 18 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 10, as amended, and accordingly are also in condition for allowance. Applicants further maintain that claim 14, which depends from claim 10 in view of an amendment in the previous response, is also in condition for allowance. Accordingly, in view of the amendments, Applicants respectfully request that these objections be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claim 20 is allowed.

Response to the Comments in the Advisory Action

The Examiner maintains the rejection of claims 7 to 9, 11 to 14 and 19 which was set forth in the Final Office Action dated February 18, 2010. In that Final Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 7 to 9, 11 to 14, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Cocolios et al., US Patent No. 6,458,330 (hereafter “Cocolios”) and under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Turnbull et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,931,684 (hereinafter “Turnbull”) in view of Cocolios. This rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the amendments noted above.

In the comments in the Advisory Action, the Examiner indicates that with regard to claims 7 and 19 the feature “succession by running product as it passes through the entry device” is not recited in the reject claims. Applicants note that claim 7 has been amended to indicate the position of the entry device with regard to the chamber and also that the running product that is passing through the entry device would first come in contact with the labyrinth system followed by the means for injecting an inert gas followed by the channel before passing to the chamber. Claims 8 and 9 have also been amended to indicate the passage of the running product through the exit device. Claim 10 has further been amended to indicate the passage of the running product through the entry device. Claim 19 has been amended to indicate the position of the entry and exit device with regard to the chamber and also the passage of the running product through each of these devices. Accordingly, in view of these amendments, Applicants maintain that the present claims are distinguished from Cocolios as well as Turnbull in view of Cocolios.

Furthermore, Cocolios teaches the reverse of what is presently claimed. In the embodiment of the present invention as set forth in claim 7, it is clearly noted that the entry device that is adjacent to and just prior to the chamber comprises at least the following three components: a labyrinth system, means for injecting an inert gas forming a gas knife, and a channel. Accordingly, a product passing through would come into contact with each of these in the order noted within the claim. More specifically, a product passing through would first come in contact with the labyrinth system followed by the means for injecting an inert gas

followed by the channel. Claims 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 each depend from claim 7 either directly or indirectly. Accordingly, the same structure is applicable with regard to the entry device. Claim 19 includes the same structure for the entry device and therefore the same reasoning is applicable to claim 19. Claim 14 has been amended to depend from claim 10, an objected claim.

Cocolios describes an apparatus with an entry device that consists of three components positioned in series and seen in succession by the treated substrate, namely a channel, a gas injection slot and a labyrinth. The present invention differs from Cocolios in that in the present invention includes an entry device that comprises at least a labyrinth system followed by a means for injecting an inert gas forming a gas knife followed by a channel. A side by side comparison of the two installations clearly reveals differences in the two inventions with regard to the route taken by the product to be treated as it passes through the entry device:

<u>Present Invention</u>	<u>Cocolios</u>
Entry device comprises:	Entry device comprises:
1) a labyrinth system followed by	1) a channel followed by
2) a means for injecting an inert gas forming a gas knife followed by	2) a gas injection slot followed by
3) a channel	3) a labyrinth

In other words, a product passing through the present invention would first come in contact with the labyrinth followed by the means for injecting an inert gas followed by the channel compared to the invention of Cocolios which describes a substrate passing through the channel followed by the gas injection slot followed by the labyrinth. By making such modifications, Applicants were able to overcome technical problems associated with the use of the invention of Cocolios.

In view of the above, Applicants maintain that 7 to 9, 11 to 14 and 19, as amended, are not anticipated by Cocolios under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claims 7 to 9, 11 to 14 and 19, as amended, are also not obvious when considered in view of Turnbull and Cocolios. As noted in the previous response, Turnbull does not teach an installation comprising a chamber having UV radiation or a source of accelerated electrons and the three components (labyrinth system, means for injection of an inert gas and a channel) in succession by the running product as claimed by Applicants. The Examiner relies upon Cocolios for the deficiencies of Turnbull stating that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a curing chamber with UV radiation or a source of accelerated electrons to cure the coated substrate" and that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange the three components in Turnbull et al to improve installation of a chamber and to control over the treatment of gaseous atmosphere inside the chamber as taught by Cocolios et al".

Turnbull does not teach an installation comprising a chamber having UV radiation or a source of accelerated electrons and the three components (labyrinth system, means for injection of an inert gas and a channel) in succession by the running product as claimed by Applicants. Cocolios does not overcome the deficiencies of Turnbull since Cocolios teaches a substrate passing through the channel followed by the gas injection slot followed by the labyrinth-- the exact opposite of what is claimed by Applicants. More specifically, Applicants claim the exact opposite of what Cocolios teaches.

Applicants maintain that one skilled in the art considering Turnbull in view of Cocolios would not have considered the present claims obvious since Cocolios teaches a completely different succession from that which is currently claimed by Applicants. One skilled in the art considering Turnbull in view of Cocolios would instead have concluded that the route taken by the substrate would be a channel followed by a gas injection slot followed by a labyrinth. There is nothing within Turnbull or Cocolios which would lead one to believe that by completely reversing the order of the channel, gas injection slot, and labyrinth with regard to the route of the substrate, improvements over the prior art would be obtained.

Applicants maintain that claims 7 to 9, 11 to 14 and 19, as amended, are clearly patentable over Turnbull in view of Cocolios.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully maintain that the pending claims are patentable over Cocolios and Turnbull in view of Cocolios. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 7 to 9, 11 to 14 and 19, as amended, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn and that all claims be allowed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants maintain that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe a telephone call would expedite the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Applicants do not believe that any fee is due at this time. However, in the event that any additional fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to debit deposit account number 01-1375 for the amount due. Also, the Commissioner is authorized to credit any overpayment with regard to the present response to deposit account number 01-1375.

Respectfully submitted,



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